(SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) By accepting almost all the major recommendations made by the Fifth Central Pay Commission, pension has been "considerably liberalised in respect of Central Government pensioners. However, as regard broadbased pension reforms in the country, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment had constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of S.A. Dave to examine policy questions connected with old age and income security in India. The Report submitted to the Government on 11.1.2000, *inter-alia,* contains recommendations on the schemes and actions that Government may take to ensure that every young worker builds up enough savings during his/her working life which could serve as a shield against poverty during old age. These recommendations have a twin focus on further improving existing pension provisions and to devise a fresh pension plan for such workers not covered by the present pension provisions. The Report has also recommended establishment of a regulatory agency called Indian Pension Authority to oversee and supervise the functioning of the pension system proposed. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has accented the Report and has initiated action on it.

Opening of CBI Office in United States

4964. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US has invited India to open an office of CBI in US on reciprocal basis;

(b) if so, whether India propose to open the office in US; and

(c) if so, when and what are the modalities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINING AND DEPARTMENT OF PENSION AND PENSIO-TRS WELFARE OF THE MINISTRY OFPERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Amendment in the Constitution

4965. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to amend the Constitution to ensure that the backlog of vacancies of SC/ST in the Central Government are filled up; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when it is likely to be brought forward?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL AND TRAINTNG AND DEPARTMENT OF PENSION AND PENSIONERS' WELFARE OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) A Constitution Amendment Bill in this regard introduced by the Government in the Lok Sabha has been passed by that House on May 10, 2000. The Bill on becoming an Act would enable the Government to exclude the backlog of reserved vacancies from the ceiling of 50 per cent reservation on total number vacancies to be filled in a year.

Conduction of Lecture Series on "Ideas that have Worked" in States/UTs

4966. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would take initiatives to organise lecture series on "Ideas that have worked" in States/UTs for the benefit of their officer's and:

(b) if so, the dates by which an action plan for the purpose is expected to be prepared and implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE) : (a) and (b) The lecture series on "Ideas that have worked" which is being jointly organised by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India, Civil Services Officers' Institute and the Government of Andhra Pradesh is currently confined only to New Delhi. The Secretaries incharge of Administrative Reforms in the States are also invited to attend the lecture series. The transcripts of the speeches are also sent to the Chief Secretaries of all the States/UTs for the benefit of their officers. Moreover, the States/UTs are competent to organise such series of lectures on their own.

Supply of Piped Gas in Agartala

4967. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state: